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The Making of English Literature. By WILLIAM H. CRAWSHAW, A.M.
Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Pp. iv+474.

Readers of Professor Crawshaw's excellent volumes entitled *The Interpretation of Literature* and *The Literary Interpretation of Life* have reason to congratulate themselves that now they can read the same author's vigorous and entertaining history of English literature. Professor Crawshaw in his history has followed the main lines of thought and interpretation set forth in the two volumes he first published. Thought, emotion, imagination, and beauty—the four elements lying at the basis of all literature—are the fundamentals of the author's thesis for the study of literature and literary history. In addition to these basic principles Professor Crawshaw insists that his book "endeavors to emphasize the fact that literature is an outgrowth of life." But these are not all the vital principles that the author lays down as guides for the reader of his volume. He reverts, in some measure, to Taine's theory of the forces which lie behind the making of a national literature, but unlike Taine he makes no undue allowance for the influence of race, epoch, environment, and personality. He likes, for instance, to hold to the pleasant theory of the combination of the Saxon and Celtic influence working in Shakespeare, but he does not, and very wisely he does not, insist on the whole course of the Anglo-Celtic influence on English literature. No one disputes the modifying power of these separate races on literature—but that that power is palpably apparent is quite another question really beyond the range of a literary historian. Such a view, however, does not preclude an author's putting much intelligent emphasis on the great life-forces which have determined the general character of English literature, and Professor Crawshaw has managed this part of his work exceedingly well. Some readers may think that the author should have made a more telling and vital connection between English life and English literature—a theory that is rapidly gaining advocates. The author explains, however, that the lack of space warrants his holding to the distinctly literary view-point.

The chapter headings in the book denote the good old-fashioned and reasonable divisions of "The Age of Chaucer," "The Age of Shakespeare," etc., and the six "books" making up the volume have the soul-satisfying titles of "Paganism and Christianity (449-1066);" "Religion and Romance (1066-1500);" "Renaissance and Reformation (1500-1660);" "Classicism (1660-1780);" "Individualism (1780-1832);" "Democracy and Science (1832-1892)." Such divisions, however arbitrary they may seem to many students, are manifestly the divisions most in accord with the author's professed scheme in writing the book.

In keeping with the general principles of the book, likewise, is the author's practice of giving few biographical details and dates; dates are given only when they are directly important as a significant fact in their relation to literature.

Our space does not permit us to go into a detailed analysis of this splendid book, splendid in its critical acumen, sane judgments, breadth of spirit, and in catholic sympathy, but we must note a point or two where we think the author might have improved his book. His treatment of the drama before Shakespeare, especially the Mystery and Morality plays, is inadequate and not compactly grouped. We are of the opinion, too, that many readers of the book will be inclined to disagree with Professor Crawshaw in his assigning Pope a place as a

forerunner of the Romantic movement. "There is in Pope," says the author, "faint glimmerings of a love for nature and even for the romantic. His sensitive temperament felt already the coming of influences that were to shape and change poetry after his death." Of course Professor Crawshaw does not consider Pope other than a poet of classicism, but it seems strange to have Pope credited with being a lover of nature—other than "nature methodized." But such criticism seems to be carping pedantry.

Professor Crawshaw has enhanced the value of his book by including many portraits in sepia tone, reproductions of old prints and pages of old manuscripts, and views of scenes and buildings famous in the literary history of England. An appendix to the volumes gives a chronological outline, a very complete reading and study list, and a suggestive and well-chosen set of questions. A literary map and a full index complete this scholarly and readable volume. But with these manifold excellences we doubt very much if the volume has the staying qualities necessary for classroom work. For the general reader it is undoubtedly an excellent book.

H. E. COBLENTZ

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

The Major Dramas of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Edited by GEORGE HENRY NETTLETON. Boston: Ginn & Co. Pp. cxvii+331.

It is somewhat surprising that students of English literature who are bitten with the desire to edit something have not fallen on the dramas of Sheridan. With the exception of the late Fraser Rae's voluminous biography of Sheridan and the same author's edition of Sheridan's *Plays*, no adequate treatment of Sheridan and his work has been made in recent years. Hence it was very appropriate that Professor Nettleton should take up Mr. Rae's work and carry it forward, especially since Mr. Rae himself admitted "that there remained a large and almost unexplored field for investigation in the study of the plays"—a critical study based on contemporary documents. This, then is the distinctive aim of Professor Nettleton's edition, "to give a critical study of Sheridan's major dramas based primarily on contemporary evidence." To this end the editor informs us he has consulted more than a thousand volumes of eighteenth-century memoirs, diaries, novels, essays, poems, newspapers, and magazines to garner material for his introduction and notes. Thus, to illuminate the "local color" in *The Rivals* one of the sections in the introduction gives a vivid and interesting picture of Bath in the eighteenth century, drawn from Goldsmith's *Life of Richard Nash*, Christopher Anstey's poem "The New Bath Guide," Fanny Burney's diary, Horace Walpole's letters, Smollett's novels, and contemporary magazines. Another section gives the story of the initial failure, and final triumph of *The Rivals* based on extracts, given in the Appendix, from contemporary documents. All this work Professor Nettleton has done in a thoroughly critical and scholarly manner with a keen literary appreciation. Admirers of Sheridan's *The Rivals*, *The School for Scandal*, and *The Critic*—and who does not admire all of these plays?—may now have their favorites printed (for the first time in America) from the authentic text of Sheridan's plays taken from the original manuscripts, and edited (for the first time anywhere) with